Phase IV

Holistic Needs Assessment

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What are the most pressing challenges or needs of this school?

The students at Hollister Elementary School perform poorly on EOG’s. Their reading scores are lower than math. Most of the students are fluent readers. This school is very rural. The free and reduced lunch rate is higher than 80%. The life experiences that provide a foundation for future learning are limited. All of these factors could result in limited vocabulary.

What student performance trends can you identify?

For the past 3 years, the students have scored significantly higher in math than reading on EOG’s.

What teacher working conditions trends can you identify?

The staff at Hollister Elementary is small, two teachers per grade level. There is a spirit of camaraderie and support. The school is a hub of the community. The fall festival is the entertainment for the entire community. Parents are welcome at school. An instructional coach and a reading coach also support the teachers in their teaching.

The staff at Hollister is small. Most staff members are required to complete a variety of essential tasks. These essential tasks keep the school running. Most schools have non-instructional staff like counselors, speech therapists and PE teachers who can assume some duties. Hollister shares the non-instructional staff so the teaching staff has to do more than at larger schools.

What are potential barriers for innovation and improvement in the school?

1. Location: this school is very rural. There are few opportunities for the students to experience the world close to home.
2. Parents: most have limited resources (free and reduced lunch rate is 71%). They work long hours away from the community (parent interview) because there are only a few places for employment in Hollister (see community asset map). Some children come to work tired because of living conditions at home (nurse interview and Title VII teacher).
3. Staff: Some teachers have been at Hollister for years and are from the community. They may have a fixed mindset.
4. Limited budget: total school budget of $81,000.